

Session 20-05, a Regular Meeting of the Library Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Marcia Kuszmaul at 5:33 p.m. on September 1, 2020 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska via Zoom webinar. One seat still remains vacant.

PRESENT: BOARDMEMBERS KUSZMAUL, SPRINGER, FAIR, FINN, PETERSON, VERNON, STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE RENNER

STAFF: LIBRARY DIRECTOR BERRY
CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

The Library Advisory Board held a Worksession prior to their regular meeting from 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. to discuss the Planned Giving program.

Chair Kuszmaul introduced Frida Renner, the new Student Representative for the Library Advisory Board. Ms. Renner gave a brief explanation of her background in Homer and what brought her to serving on the board.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Kuszmaul asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

FINN/VERNON MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS IS.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. LAB August 4, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

Chair Kuszmaul asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

FAIR/SPRINGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 4, 2020 MEETING.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Library Director Report for August 2020
 - i. April – August 2020 Patron Reservations Graph
 - ii. 2019 Statistical Report
 - iii. 2020 Statistical Report (laydown)

Library Director Berry reviewed the Directors Report in the packet, noting the following:

- Reviewed graph showing patron requests to come to the library are way up; they raised the limit to 10 patrons.
- Bill Noomah is moving on; job is currently advertised and closes September 2nd.
- Waiting for Wi-Fi antennae and should have signal across parking lot.
- Friends of the Homer Library book sale is coming up September 12-13th; books only in front lobby and reservations required. A lot of discussion on safety but worked out a good system.
- Upcoming KPB Votes series of presentation and discussions about upcoming electoral issues; will be done by Zoom. First one scheduled for September 10th at 10:30 am, details to come.
- Statistics still trending upward slowly and returning back to where they were in February.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Planned Giving Program
 - i. Materials from Homer Foundation Planned Giving Webinar (laydown)

Chair Kuszmaul introduced the item by reading the title. She recapped what the board discussed during their worksession and opened the floor for discussion.

Boardmember Peterson voiced her appreciation for the worksession. She commented that there are lots of nonprofits in town with accounts at The Homer Foundation (THF); she wonders about not stepping on others' toes. She understands that all the groups will be doing their own fundraising, but to be sensitive and realize that we're not the only ones out there cultivating legacy donators. She is curious about how best to proceed.

Library Director Berry said it will come down to them presenting it straight: here is what we have, here is what the Endowment Fund is intended for, these are the services it supports, and leave it to them to decide. Don't want to put the squeeze on people. He noted that in THF's presentation it was said the #1 reason they don't give to a certain cause is because they aren't asked so getting word out that we are accepting donations is the ask.

Ms. Peterson inquired if having tent cards around library tables is appropriate to get in people's minds. Mr. Berry responded that it may not be a good idea, but doesn't see anything wrong with having a flyer and/or brochure at the Circulation Desk for those who ask about it and a support page on the library's webpage. He just want them to be tasteful and subtle.

Boardmember Finn suggested having items that can be left out to be taken during COVID-19. She spoke to Ms. Peterson's comments and the worksession. They could reach out to people we know, which individualizes it a bit. People have different passions and there are those whose passion is the library.

Boardmember Fair likened this small market to the idea of local newspapers after the same advertisers. They know there's only a certain amount of money out there that people will put towards their advertising, but that's the way they survive and they have to get word out there to give people the options. You have to give them the option and let them chose to put their money where they think it will do the best. The same thing is true in giving, you have to let people know the opportunity is there. The sticky situation comes from delineating what we need money for versus what the Friends of the Homer Library needs money for, and that needs to be a deliberate and careful delineation. It's important that people give to both, but we want to make sure that a donor gives money to the library, that it's as good a choice as given to the FHL. Mr. Fair reiterated what Mike Miller with THF mentioned about getting a hold of library patrons directly, give them an opportunity to opt into a newsletter, and thinks its good idea. Maybe they could produce some, spread word widely.

Mr. Berry agreed with Mr. Fair's suggestion. He is not sure if a newsletter will do it (people already get too many emails and staff doesn't have the capacity to keep one going), but maybe an annual soiree. He mentioned that THF sent him the quarterly report for the Endowment Fund and as of the end of last quarter, June 30th, the Library Endowment Fund had \$12,096.73 in it. The amount available to spend, in theory, would be \$483.87. Since it's not over \$500 there won't be a disbursement this year, which was expected.

Ms. Peterson asked about a soiree, if all library cardholders would be invited or if they would select people that would be interested. Mr. Berry stated he just came up with the idea so details are vague. He's not sure if they could invite all library cardholders since that's about 9,600 people, but maybe a circle of supporters. Details can be discussed; he likes book plates and sponsored subscriptions which has been done in the past. Ms. Peterson understands that those type of events take a large amount of staff time, but we have volunteers and she would come in to do a work party, or set it up so people can take the things home to do. Mr. Fair agreed that it would be a good use of volunteer time rather than staff. Boardmember Springer shared conversations she's had about getting Girl Scout activities going; she would be willing to help coordinate that.

Chair Kuszmaul brought the discussion back to case for support and messaging. She thinks there is a difference between a launch to get info out and sustainable activities. For a launch, she suggested having a bookmark placed in every book that's checked out or having cards out on some of the tables. Would not be for a long period of time but as an initial launch.

Ms. Kuszmaul explained how they need to create their case statement: what are their headlines, key statements? She requested that boardmembers work on case statement drafts for next meeting to

work through and come back with best ideas. Discussion ensued on the length of the statement and how they can collaborate on statement writing, such as submitting ideas to Mr. Berry for the next meeting and it being like a workshop where boardmembers can combine their ideas. Chair Kuszmaul clarified the purpose of the statement, how it should be a core document that could be turned into a brochure, a tagline, their elevator pitch. It's the document that is the rationale for "why give". Boardmember Fair confirmed that the statement needs to be succinct, to the point, and essentially be 200 words or less on why a person should want to give money to the endowment fund.

Discussion continued on what key points should be included in the statement and other endowment fund planning points:

- Each boardmember submit to staff their top reasons by September 25th via email for the October 6th meeting, and then one of the writers of the board could craft it into a statement.
- It would be preferable to have the launch event in person, even if they have to wait several months for COVID-19 to pass; that time will allow the LAB to plan.
- Library has a small advertising budget to cover some costs for brochures, signage, and printing; Mr. Berry would be able to provide the graphic designing.
- Friends of the Homer Library will assist with funding enhancements (radio shows, reviewing books, children's programming), but funding for the core of the library to maintain its current excellence, is the job of the endowment fund; people can give to both as short term (FHL) and long term (Endowment Fund).
- Utilizing the Homer Foundation to fund brochures and what other kind of marketing support they can provide. Advice from THF to invest efforts into already-engaged library patrons at the beginning and not try to market to the entire community. Also, launching your program with a matching incentive is a helpful way to kick it off.
- At next meeting, think about how to structure a matching grant.
- Privacy concerns regarding contacting library patrons who are noted to be frequent users. They wouldn't pull some list and cold call people. It can be done informally as patrons come in and have one-on-one conversations with library staff, since they see who comes in regularly.

NEW BUSINESS

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Appointment Letter/Certificate for Student Representative Frida Renner
- B. Letter from Boardmember Vernon to Homer News 8/20/20
- C. LAB 2020 Calendar
- D. Boardmember Attendance at 2020 City Council Meetings

Chair Kuszmaul reviewed informational materials with the board. There was discussion on whether to reschedule the October 6th meeting due to the City Election; it was agreed to leave it as-is. Boardmember Vernon agreed to give the LAB report at City Council's September 14th meeting, and Chair Kuszmaul at the September 28th meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Library Director Berry and City Clerk Jacobsen had no further comments.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Kuszmaul thanked everyone's participation in the worksession and moving forward with the planned giving program.

COMMENTS OF THE BOARD

Boardmember Vernon thanked Library Director Berry for all his contributions into the library.

Boardmember Finn welcomed Student Representative Renner and how it's nice to have student on the board. She noted that any of her friends are welcome to come to meetings as public participants and provide their input. She shared her excitement about the worksession and how it expanded her willingness to participate.

Boardmembers Fair, Peterson, Springer and Student Representative Renner had no comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m. A regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held via Zoom webinar in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK

Approved: _____